

to aboriginal domestic economy. The inactive life soon makes her fat, her complexion becomes clearer, and in many cases there may be noted absolute beauty of feature.

It is not forbidden to the young men to glance at her through the door (though they may not enter the house), provided the inspection is made with matrimonial ideas; and should an eligible suitor demand her hand, she is usually at once released and the bargain is made, though the richer bridegrooms often prefer that the full period of seclusion be observed.

When the young lady is thus restored to society, a grand family feast is celebrated; cattle are killed and a ball organized, while the heroine of the day, dressed in the clothes which she has made during her retirement, and in the glory of her restored ornaments, is then considered as married without further ceremony, except the payment of her stipulated price. This consideration generally takes the shape of cattle divided between the father and other relatives of the bride. The woman is then obliged to maintain her husband in food and clothing, and is the principal in all matters of business, no bargain made by a man being considered valid unless it has received the sanction of his wife. Women are treated with much consideration, and it is important for a stranger to gain their good-will.

An Indian cannot maltreat his wife, as, by the law of compensation, her relatives would demand a reckoning; and should the woman die in childbirth, the husband must pay to her father an amount equal to her original price; but if the wife prove unfaithful, which is of very rare occurrence, her father must refund to the husband the payment made at the time of the marriage. Should he be unable to satisfy this demand, he looks to the seducer to make good the amount, besides the "payment of tears" to the girl's mother.

Upon the death of the husband, the wife becomes the inheritance of one of his brothers, usually the youngest; and if there are no brothers, of the nephew.

MARRIAGE AMONG THE GOAJIRAS OF VENEZUELA.

THE ceremonies attending marriage, which is a mere matter of buying and selling, are as follows:

As soon as a girl reaches a marriageable age she is shut up alone in an isolated hut, deprived of all ornaments, and dressed in a long white gown. During the first few days she must not drink water, sustaining herself only with a composition of medicinal herbs called "haguape." She is then publicly spoken of as "surtirse surupauru"—the literal translation of which is, "shut up in her house."

The duration of this retirement varies according to the position of the family. The poorer Indians cannot permit their daughters to remain idle for more than a few weeks, while among the rich this seclusion may continue for two, three, or even four years.

During this time the girl learns all that a woman is supposed to know. She is taught to spin and weave, make clothing and hammocks, and everything pertaining